

MOTION BY SUPERVISORS SHEILA KUEHL AND  
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November 20, 2018

**Enhancing the My Health LA Program**

In 1995, as the County was facing a financial crisis and struggled to keep the doors open in County health facilities, this Board asked our local community clinics to partner with us to serve our neediest residents. The resulting program, originally known as the Public-Private Partnership (or PPP) program, allowed the County to continue to ensure that residents who did not have insurance would still have access to high-quality medical care. For over twenty years, as the healthcare landscape has changed, the County and our community partner clinics have worked together to ensure that the clinics and the program are able to best meet the needs of the program members. In 2008 this Board allocated over \$44M to the community clinics so that they could expand their physical capacity and continue to meet the needs of our residents. In 2014, when over 1 million of our previously uninsured County residents became eligible to receive Medi-Cal, thanks to the Affordable Care Act, the County demonstrated its continuing support for the program by increasing the program budget so that it could serve more people.

**MOTION**

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Ridley-Thomas \_\_\_\_\_

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The contracts before us today represent the next step in the evolution of the County's partnership with the community clinics. The original PPP program started with 45 contracted sites. We are now up to over 200 clinic sites and these new contracts ensure that My Health LA members will be able to receive services at even more clinics next year. These contracts will also allow the County to enhance our monitoring and auditing efforts so that we can guarantee that My Health LA members are able to receive vital medical services in a timely manner. However, there is still more that can be done to enhance the My Health LA program.

As the County moves forward in our efforts to provide integrated, holistic care to all of our clients, the County must consider what else we could do to ensure that program members receive the services they need in the most convenient manner. Many of our My Health LA program members suffer from multiple health issues, and some also have untreated or undertreated mental health and substance use issues. Although there is already a benefit available to My Health LA members for free substance use treatment services, these services have been greatly underutilized. The County should take a closer look at this aspect of the program to see what changes may be made to ensure that every My Health LA member who needs and wants to receive substance use treatment services can easily and quickly access such services.

It is also necessary to do more to provide timely access to mental health services for our My Health LA members. Our Department of Public Health estimates that over 8% of County adults have depression and 11% are at risk for developing major depression.<sup>1</sup> These conditions, when left untreated, can have a devastating impact on the client as well as on family and friends. Yet many of our county residents who do not

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<sup>1</sup> Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, Office of Health Assessment and Epidemiology. *Key Indicators of Health by Service Planning Area*; January 2017.

have Medi-Cal or other health insurance have very limited options to receive mental health services for lower level acuity problems like depression and anxiety. Too many of our My Health LA members are dependent upon charity mental health care from community-based organizations. We know that our society is healthier when everyone has access to the care that they need to thrive. The County should closely examine options for providing access to mental health services for My Health LA members.

The County has taken great steps in the past several years to take advantage of the Affordable Care Act and the Drug Medi-Cal Waiver in order to enhance the services and benefits that are offered to the over 4 million Medi-Cal beneficiaries in the County. We now must strive to ensure that our residents who remain uninsured are able to access these vital services, as well.

**WE, THEREFORE, MOVE** that the Board of Supervisors take the following actions:

- 1) Direct the Director of Public Health, in coordination with the Director of Health Services and the Interim Health Agency Director, to report back in 120 days with an assessment of the current utilization of substance use treatment services by My Health LA members and recommendations for how to improve utilization rates.
- 2) Direct the Director of Mental Health, in coordination with the Director of Health Services, County Counsel, the Chief Executive Officer, and the Interim Health Agency Director, to report back in 120 days with recommendations for funding options to support on-site mental health services being provided to the mild to moderate population in the primary care setting, and how the County can support the expansion of timely

access to mild to moderate mental health services for My Health LA members.

S: ES/Enhancing the My Health LA Program